

Moses and the Burning Bush

Overview



Materials You'll Need

- large white poster board (or white construction paper)
- red, orange and yellow tempera paint
- 1-inch square sponges
- clothespins
- paper plates
- old newspapers
- pencils or markers



Scriptures

Ex 2:11-4:17

Bible Truth Objective(s)

God always prepares and guides those whom He chooses for a special purpose.

Behavioral Objective(s)

To trust in God's guidance, no matter what we are doing or where we are.

Memory Verse

"God is faithful." (1 Cor 1:9a)



Bible Knowledge

Moses

The book of Exodus does not give a lot of detail on Moses' time in the palace. But we can be sure that his education was the best of that time. He likely would have learned three languages: Egyptian, Akkadian, and Hebrew.

Although he grew up among royalty, he was not blind to the plight of his people. He faced an inner struggle when he saw one of his own being beaten by an Egyptian. He chose to render justice by killing the Egyptian. When he was discovered, he fled to Midian and then eventually became a shepherd in Jethro's house (Ex 2:16-21).

The Burning Bush

Moses first met God at Mount Horeb, the "mountain of God" (Ex 3:1). The flaming bush was likely a sight to behold since the bush itself was not consumed. When God called out to Moses, he responded immediately by saying, "Here I am." Yet, when God revealed His plan, Moses began to

give out all sorts of excuses. In fact, Moses brought up four points:

1. Who am I to go? (Ex 3:11)
2. What will I say to the Israelites when they ask who sent me? (Ex 3:13)
3. What if they don't believe me? (Ex 4:1)
4. I am slow in speech and am not eloquent. (Ex 4:10)

With each of these points, God reassured him that He already had everything planned out. God's responses to Moses' questions are as follows:

1. God would be with Moses (Ex 3:12).
2. I Am Who I Am (Ex 3:14).
3. He showed Moses many miraculous signs (i.e. rod turned to snake, the leprous hand, water turned to blood, Ex 4:2-9).
4. Aaron would become his spokesperson (Ex 4:14-16).

Before Moses could go, he had to first ask Jethro's permission since he was already a part of the family. Jethro gave Moses his blessing and Moses left with his wife and sons (Ex 4:19).



Understanding Your Students

The concept of “trust” needs to be established with your children. They will most likely know what it means to “obey” God, but the idea of “trust” can be confusing. Tell them that when they trust someone, they are putting their hope in this person, and they totally believe that this person will not let them down. To demonstrate what it means to trust someone, you can have the children try this activity with each other.

Pair the children up. Tell them that they have a mission, and this mission is for them to walk around the room once and return to their seats after the walk has been made. The only trick is that they have to walk in pairs, and one person in each pair must keep

his/her eyes closed. The other partner must help to guide the blinded partner around the room, and then to his/her seat. In order to successfully do this, the blinded person must trust the other and know that his/her partner will not lead him/her into any obstacles. Monitor the activity very closely, and make sure the children are being very careful.

When the activity is over, have the children return to their seats, and let the children share their feelings on the activity. Your concluding point should be one that reflects the fact that we are sometimes spiritually blinded in our lives, and sometimes we aren’t really sure about what we should do, or where we should go. God is always willing to be our guide, because He loves us so much. All we have to do is trust Him enough to let Him guide us so that we won’t be so lost when we are going through difficult times.



Vocabulary

Pharaoh

the king of Egypt

Palace

the place where kings, queens, princes and princesses live; a large and beautiful home

Whip

a long rope used to hit a person or an animal to make them work faster and harder

Suffer

to be in a lot of pain

Sign

something special someone does to show another that what they are saying is true



Before You Teach

In the story of Moses, we see how carefully God prepares a leader. When Pharaoh ordered the Hebrew midwives to kill all Hebrew male babies (Ex 1:16), the midwives did not obey the orders. Three month-old Moses was then discovered by the Pharaoh’s daughter but was allowed to have a Hebrew nurse—his own mother. During his earliest years, Moses’s mother was able to instill in her son a firm belief in God and a knowledge of God’s promise to Israel. Then Moses was adopted by Pharaoh’s daughter and trained for leadership in the most advanced civilization of that period. He was “learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians” (Acts 7:22). Yet he could not forget the bondage of his people and “refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter” (Heb 11:24). His rash act of killing an Egyptian (Ex 2:11-12) forced him to flee

into the wilderness, where he met Jethro. Moses married one of Jethro’s daughters and learned to care for his father-in-law’s sheep. He also learned wilderness routes and sources of food and water.

Although it might have seemed like a life full of many ups and downs to Moses, God was preparing him for leadership by letting him live the life he did.

Yet when God spoke to him at the burning bush, Moses was still reluctant to take on the important job of rescuing God’s people. He gave God many excuses. God had to show him several signs and wonders to encourage him. In fact, God was very patient with Moses. But because he kept insisting he was not the right person to do the job, God eventually became angry (Ex 4:14). God wanted Moses to realize that the path before him had been prepared: the signs to show Pharaoh who was God, the plagues, and Aaron as a spokesperson. All Moses needed to do was trust and obey.

Today, God may be preparing us for an important job. Are we ready to trust and obey?



Bible Story

Baby Moses

Today we're going to continue with the story of Moses and learn about how he obeyed God and how God chose him to be a leader of His people. But before we go on, let's make sure that we all know where we left off last week.

Let's think about Egypt during the time when Moses was born. Pharaoh (review who Pharaoh is by taking a quick student response) ordered all the Hebrew babies who were boys to be killed. Remember, the Hebrews are the Israelites. It is just another name for the same thing. Does anyone remember why Pharaoh made such an awful command? He was afraid the Hebrew people would one day take over the land if there were too many of them.

When one Hebrew woman heard this order, she was sad because she had a very special little baby boy. Who was this special baby boy? Yes, it was Moses. Moses' mother did not want him to be killed, so she hid baby Moses in a basket and put the basket in the river. Then she got her daughter Miriam to watch the basket to see what would happen. Later, Pharaoh's daughter found Moses and wanted him to become her son. This meant that Moses would be safe and not killed! Moses' mother was very happy. But Pharaoh's daughter needed someone to take care of Moses when he was still so young. Pharaoh's daughter asked Moses' mother to take care of young Moses for her! This way, Moses' mother could teach Moses about God and all the ways God had helped her family and her people. Now that we all know what happened last week, let's continue with this week's story.

Moses Lives in the Palace

Moses stayed with his mother, and she loved him and taught him all sorts of things. Moses grew, and he grew, and he grew until one day, he became big enough to go to the palace and live with the princess, the Pharaoh's daughter. Moses was very lucky to be able to live in the palace.

Remember from the last lesson that Pharaoh had made all the Hebrew people into slaves? That means every day, they had to work very hard and do

whatever the Egyptians told them to do. The Hebrew people did not like this but they had to listen to the Egyptians.

In the palace, Moses felt a little different from the other people. Can anyone think of why? Yes, it's because he was Hebrew and those in the palace were Egyptians. But even though he spent so much time with the Egyptians, Moses never forgot that he was Hebrew. It's because his mother had taught him all about his people before!

Now picture Moses in your head. Close your eyes if it helps. By now Moses is a strong young man, and he's in the palace. Let's think about the palace. What does a palace usually look like? It probably has a lot of gold, shining jewels, and beautiful gardens. (The purpose is to build up a grand and spectacular image in the students' minds to contrast with the Hebrews' servitude.) Good, do we all have this picture of the palace and Moses in our minds? Nod if you do.

Now picture Moses leaving the palace, leaving the garden and walking out into a very different place. It's hot. It's dirty. There's straw everywhere. There's mud everywhere. Nothing is shiny or pretty. And Moses is looking out into this place. Shhh...listen...do you hear what Moses hears? It's not birds chirping. It's the sound of people crying out. It's the sound of a whip. It's the sound of someone yelling at people. As Moses keeps walking closer, he sees his people, the Hebrews, working as slaves. He sees them working their very hardest, but they're being whipped and yelled at to work even harder. Moses' heart breaks because these people are Hebrews, just like him. He wished they didn't have to be slaves and could enjoy the palace like he did.

Moses Leaves Egypt

One day, Moses did something to make him leave Egypt. He saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew very badly. Moses wanted to help the Hebrew and began to fight with the Egyptian. They fought and fought, and before Moses knew what had happened, Moses had killed the Egyptian. Now, has anyone here ever tried to hide something you've done wrong? Raise your hand if you have. Moses did the same thing. After he killed the Egyptian, he looked to his left and then to his right and saw that no one else was there. So he buried the Egyptian in the sand, thinking that no one would ever know

what happened.

But secrets always have a way of coming out. Soon, other people learned what Moses had done. Even the Pharaoh knew! As a punishment, Pharaoh wanted to kill Moses. Moses didn't know what to do, so he ran away to a place called Midian.

The Burning Bush

For many years, Moses lived in Midian, and he became a shepherd. One day, while Moses was taking care of the sheep, he saw something very strange. He saw a bush that was on fire. But the bush didn't turn black and become ashes. Have any of you ever seen a campfire before? At the end, the wood always turns black, right? Well, this didn't happen to the bush. It looked as if it wasn't being burned at all! Moses was shocked and thought, "How can a bush not burn when there is a fire?"

So Moses got closer to the bush because he wanted to find out more about this amazing sight. Then he heard a voice from within the bush call out, "Moses, Moses!" Just think—a voice was coming from the bush! Who do you think was calling out to Moses? That's right, God was calling out to Moses. How incredible is that?

Once Moses heard the voice, he replied, "Here I am." God then asked Moses to take off his sandals because he was standing on God's ground, on holy ground. God then told him the rest of His message. God wanted to use Moses to lead the people out of Egypt.

God said, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham and of Isaac and of Jacob. I have seen how my people suffer in Egypt, and I have heard their cry. I know that the Egyptians are very mean to the Israelites and I want you to go back to Egypt to lead the Israelites out into a beautiful land called Canaan." You see, God is all knowing, and He knew what the Israelites needed.



Check For Understanding

1. **Who took care of Moses when he was small?** (His own mother.)
2. **When Moses was older, where did he live?** (In the palace, with the princess.)

Moses is Afraid

Now up until then, Moses had only led sheep and not people. What God was asking him to do scared Moses because he thought, "All those people! How can I lead them?"

So Moses told God, "I'm not good enough."

But God said to Moses, "Do not worry. I will be with you and I will help you."

Moses wasn't sure that he could do what God wanted. He began to think of all the problems that could come up. He asked God, "What if the people don't believe that you have given me this message? What if they think I made it up?"

So God allowed Moses to perform mighty signs. God asked Moses, "What are you holding in your hand?"

Moses replied, "It's a rod." God told Moses to throw the rod to the ground. The rod turned into a snake, and Moses was so scared that he ran away! But then God told Moses to pick up the snake by the tail. When Moses did that, the snake turned back into a rod.

God said to Moses, "If they will not believe you when you speak my words, show them this sign." Because God knew how scared Moses was, God also gave him some other signs to show the people in case they did not believe.

Yet, Moses was still afraid. "Oh, Lord, I don't speak well in front of people! How can I go before Pharaoh? I might not know what to say, or the words might come out all wrong!"

God knew how scared Moses felt and said to him, "I will teach you what to say. And look, your older brother Aaron is coming to visit you right now. He speaks well and he can speak to Pharaoh for you. I will be with the both of you."

After that, Moses obeyed God, and together with his brother Aaron, they went to see the Hebrews and Pharaoh.

3. **What made Moses leave Egypt?** (He killed an Egyptian who was hurting an Israelite.)
4. **What did Moses do in Midian?** (He became a shepherd.)
5. **Who talked to Moses from the burning bush?** (God.)
6. **What did God say to Moses?** (God told Moses to lead the Israelites out of Egypt.)

7. **When Moses was afraid to go, what did God do to help him?** (God told Moses He would always be with him to help him. He also showed him some signs.)



Life Application Story

The Dreadful Night

It was Halloween night and all the children in Julie and Tommy Lewis' neighborhood got dressed in their costumes. Some of the children were witches, some were goblins, and some were ghosts. All of the kids except for Julie and Tommy were ready to go trick-or-treating and come home with loads upon loads of candy!

Julie and Tommy watched from the window as they saw their friends laughing and talking about the candy they would get from Halloween night. Julie let out a sigh, and Tommy just sat in a corner with a frown on his face. Their mom, Mrs. Lewis, knew that they both felt left out of that day's fun, so she came in with a tray of hot cocoa. "Hey, kids, come here! Hot cocoa!"

Julie slowly walked to her mom. Tommy took longer, but soon, both of them were sitting at the kitchen table drinking their cocoa and eating some popcorn. Mrs. Lewis began, "Julie, Tommy, why are your faces so sad?"

"Well, Mom, everyone else is dressed up to go trick-or-treating. It just doesn't seem fair that we can't go!" Tommy said.

Mrs. Lewis smiled understandingly, "Julie, do you feel the same way?"

"I know you said we shouldn't celebrate Halloween, but it does look like so much fun. And some of the costumes are so pretty. Jenn and Lisa are fairies and they have the most beautiful dresses!"

"Kids, I know it's hard to be different from everyone else. But you're not celebrating Halloween because I said you couldn't. Do you remember why we don't celebrate Halloween?"

"Yes, I know," replied Julie. "It's because Halloween is not a holiday that God would want us to celebrate."

"That's right, Julie," said Mrs. Lewis.

8. **How do you know God is always with you?** (Allow students to answer.)

"Halloween is a holiday that worships the dead and other gods. Since we worship the one true God, why would we celebrate a holiday that is for false gods? If we celebrated Halloween, we wouldn't be listening to the voice of God."

"I know, Mom," Tommy said. "It's just so hard to do the right thing sometimes."

"Yes, Tommy, it is hard to be different, but God will help us through these times." Tommy nodded and drank some more of his hot cocoa.

Later that night, the winds blew hard and howled between the houses. Worried parents called out to their kids to end trick-or-treating early and come inside. But even inside, no one felt safe. It started to rain, and the raindrops pounded against the windows, and the windows sounded like they were going to break.

"Mom, I'm scared," Tommy whispered.

Julie, who was also scared, said, "I think God will watch over us."

Mrs. Lewis smiled and said, "Yes, you're right, Julie. God will watch over us, especially because we listened to Him. Now that we're scared, God will listen to our prayers!"

Tommy smiled too, once he thought about what his mom said. He knew it was true. God would listen to their prayers for protection. That night, when the storm became worse, Julie and Tommy continued to pray for God's guidance. The wind was so strong that it broke some old tree trunks, including one close to the Lewis' house.

The next morning, Julie and Tommy saw the tree trunk by their house. "Wow, Mom, God must have watched over and protected us yesterday," Julie said after she came back inside the house.

"Yeah," Tommy said. "Even though doing the right thing was hard, I'm glad we listened to God because God sure listened to our prayers last night."

"That's right," said Mrs. Lewis with thankfulness in her heart.

Questions to Think About

1. **Should we go trick-or-treating on Halloween? Why or why not?** (Allow students to respond. Explain that it is a festival that celebrates the dead and other false gods and is not just about candy.)
2. **Who protected the Lewis family during the storm?** (God.)
3. **Even though Julie and Tommy felt bad in the beginning that they could not go trick-or-treating, they knew that when they followed God's teachings, He would always protect them. How has God protected you?** (Allow students to answer.)



Activity 1

Moses at the Burning Bush

Look at the picture of Moses and the burning bush. Have the students cut out the squares and try to put the puzzle back together again.



Activity 2

God is Always With Us

How is God with us in each picture? Finish each sentence.

1. God is with us when we _____. (sleep)
2. God is with us when we ride the _____. (bus)
3. God is with us when we are _____. (sick)
4. God is with us when we are _____. (happy)



Activity 3

Burning Bush Painting

Materials:

1. large white poster board (or white construction paper)
2. red, orange and yellow tempera paint
3. 1-inch square sponges
4. clothes pins
5. paper plates

6. old newspapers
7. pencils or markers

Directions:

1. Cover the tables with old newspapers.
2. Give each student a piece of poster board or construction paper. Ask students to draw an outline of a bush (try to cover the entire paper).
3. Pour small amounts of red, yellow and orange paint on a paper plate. Students can share plates.
4. Give each student a sponge and a clothespin. Show students how to pinch the sponge using the clothespin.
5. Dip the sponge into the paint and blot or stamp the paint onto the paper.
6. Encourage the students to use their imagination and create bushes covered with fire.

Activity 5:1

Moses and the Burning Bush

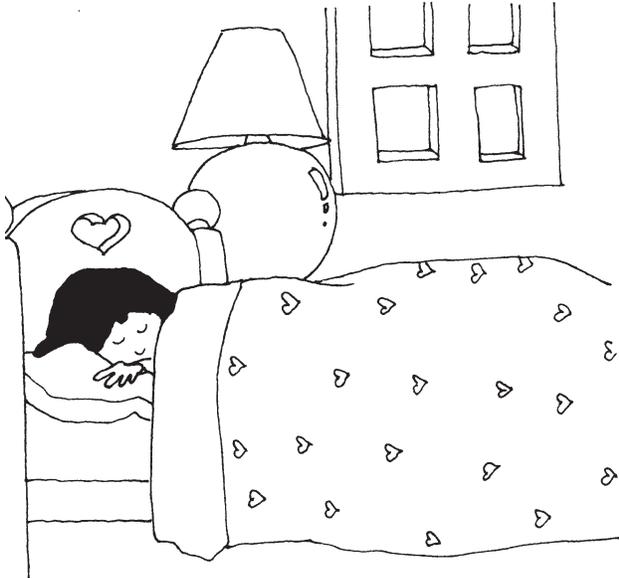
Look at the picture of Moses and the burning bush. Have the students cut out the squares and try to put the puzzle back together again.



Activity 5:2

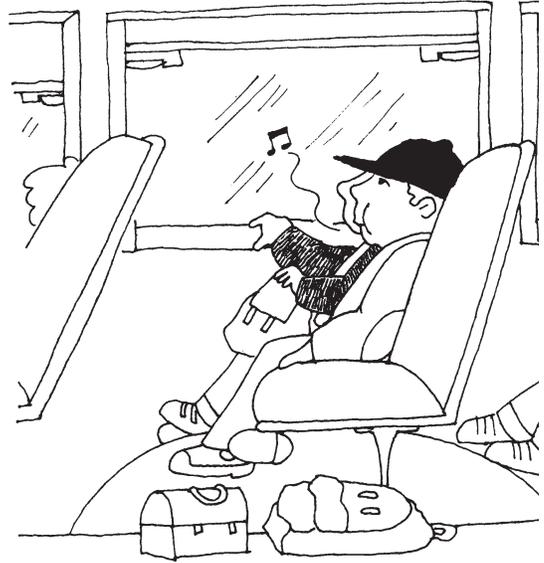
God is Always With Us

Look at each picture. How is God with us in each one?
Finish the sentence. Words to choose are: **bus, sick, happy, sleep**



1. God is with us when we

_____.



2. God is with us when we ride
the _____.



3. God is with us when we are

_____.



4. God is with us when we are

_____.